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UNH Criminologist Available to Discuss NH's Ranking as Safest State in Nation

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UNH Criminologist Available To Discuss NH's Ranking As Safest State In Nation

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DURHAM, N.H. – Ted Kirkpatrick, co-director of Justiceworks at the University of New Hampshire and associate dean of the UNH College of Liberal Arts, is available to discuss new ranks that show New Hampshire is the safest state in the nation.

Kirkpatrick can discuss the nature of such rankings and what may influence them.

"Rankings of this sort are best considered to be soft brush strokes of a very difficult reality to paint. The true incidence and prevalence of crime are extremely hard to measure, if at all. New Hampshire may be 'among the safest' in the nation if we use crimes reported as a measure of safety. But that historically has been true," Kirkpatrick says.

"What is more remarkable to many criminologists is the decline in crime rates across the nation over the past dozen years. Yet many 'fear of crime' surveys of the population suggest that the fear of crime has gone up in those same years," he says.

CQ Press released *Crime State Rankings 2010*, the newest edition of the annual volume comparing the 50 states in more than 500 crime-related categories. New Hampshire received the lowest crime rate ranking again this year, followed by Vermont and North Dakota. New Hampshire reported only 13 murders out of a population of 1.3 million. The state had the second lowest rate for aggravated assault with only 94.7 cases per 100,000 citizens in 2008.

Ranked least favorably among the states was Nevada, followed by New Mexico and Louisiana. Nevada's murder rate was just over six times higher than New Hampshire's, and the Silver State reported a rape rate of 42.4 cases per 100,000 people compared to the national average of 29.3. Nevada also tops the list for robbery rate, with an average 248.9 reported cases per 100,000 citizens versus the national rate of 145.3, and New Hampshire's rate of 31.8.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling more than 12,200 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.

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